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INL, Conrad & Bischoff bring E85 fuel to eastern Idaho motoring public

IDAHO FALLS — Idaho National Laboratory has worked with local motor fuel supplier Conrad & Bischoff to make E85 — the alternative fuel that is 85 percent ethanol and just 15 percent gasoline — available commercially to the public for the first time in eastern Idaho.

With nearly 300 of its newer light-duty cars and pickup trucks able to run on E85, INL has fueling stations at multiple locations, but the fuel was not publically sold in Idaho Falls until Conrad & Bischoff agreed to market it here. Pump islands now have been installed and E85 can be purchased at the Conrad & Bischoff headquarters on North Holmes Avenue. The company also sells biodiesel, another popular alternative fuel, at the same location.

INL fleet vehicles that use E85 will now have another fueling option for employees driving company light-duty vehicles. The INL fleet will also provide a base of support for Conrad & Bischoff's investment in bringing this cleaner-burning fuel to eastern Idaho motorists. INL has been seeking a local established fuel vendor to supply E85 in a place accessible to the public since the lab began receiving E85-capable vehicles about two years ago. Employees will be encouraged to fuel E85-capable INL vehicles at the Conrad & Bischoff station as a means of increasing INL's total use of alternative fuels.

E85 is composed of 85 percent ethanol from renewable sources and 15 percent petroleum-based compounds. It reduces the nation's dependence on foreign oil while supporting agricultural and chemical processing jobs in America. Using the fuel also helps INL, which has the largest government fleet in the region, meet government targets for increased use of alternative fuels and a reduction in petroleum fuel use.

Energy Secretary Steven Chu recently recognized INL for reducing its FY-09 fossil fuel use by 197,040 gallons — a 19 percent reduction compared to the previous year. Alternate fuel use for the same period was up 58,382 gallons, a 72 percent rise. The changes far exceed what DOE requires of INL — a 2 percent annual reduction in fossil fuel use each year from the base year of 2005, and a 10 percent annual increase in the use of alternate fuels.

INL is one of the DOE's 10 multiprogram national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of DOE's strategic goal areas: energy, national security, science and environment. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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